1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

701 as great a military figure as Emperor Menelik II was
703 close to falling apart at the time of his great victory over the invading Italians in 1896. The Amhara resists discipline except for short-lived adulation of a military hero who inspires him; he comes to fight, not to wait; even today, in the modern army, Ethiopian officers characterize the Amhara soldier as fearless, brave, but unwilling to take orders and having a tendency to act as an individual in battle. He is characterized as almost opposite from the patient Galla soldier who takes orders and cooperates smoothly with his military outfit, but rarely takes initiative.

[578] Regional clannishness, easily stirred by news from the home district, was another motive that could cause large segments of a traditional Amhara army to vanish almost overnight. A third development that would whittle away an army gradually was the almost inevitable outcome of having been stationed in one vicinity too long. In this case, the countryside was soon stripped bare by the military foragers, the "gabbar" was suffering famine himself, as if a vast cloud of locusts had nibbled away every leaf ("gonäqhchäfä"). A fourth motive, related to the first, might be loss of confidence in the strength and wisdom of their chief, in which case the soldiers not wanting to return home without glory took to the woods and became bandits ("shefta"). The latter were a major problem after every war. Even a liberal statesman like Ras Imru, as governor of Gondar after the liberation of the country in World War II, found harsh measures the only remedy.

[727]

782 left, while boasts are shouted rythmically. Personal
726 boasts are interspersed with shouts of loyalty to the
521
535 emperor ("Addis Ababa! Addis Ababa!"), or recalling past loyal bravery in the service of a provincial chieftain. Fukkara is performed also before the military games of "ganna" on Christmas, and outside the church on Epiphany (Temqat), to express the readiness of the young warriors to defend the faith, and on weddings to boast of warrior ancestors and so impress the in-laws.

[533] The song and dance is also referred to as "dan-kira " (stomping); to distinguish it from the tamer entertainment song, "zafan" performed by female "azmari" who perform accompanied by a violin ("masenqo") or banjo ("qrar"), often recounting tales of renown in ballad form. The "fukkara" in military life takes place before the "joy tent" ("das") of the king, before the "denkwan" (from diwan, round cotton or hair tent) of feudal lords on the march; or, in honor of a successful "killer" ("gedday") of a lion, rhinoceros, elephant or human enemy, in presence of the trophy.

● [727] The dance after the victorious battle is called "hoto". It is a simple jumping up and down, brandishing spear, rifle or stick vertically, reminiscent of the Central and West African dancing to exhaustion. It is accompanied by refrains, shouted frequently in response to impromptu poetry made up to celebrate the event, such as "yebahalal jebo" (the hyena will swallow him, i.e. the slain enemy). This refrain is also used before the battle, to defy the enemy and pretend that victory

782 is already assured. It is also performed on Epiphany,
726 to defy human as well as spirit enemiesoof the Faith.
521
535 Before battle, it was the response of the simple soldiers, ("wätadär") to the pep-talk ("arraga") given them by the commander, encouraging them to stand their ground.

727 After thevictorious battle, the soldier could look
554 forward to taking part in the royal feasting, the "gabber", and to lording it over the local "gabbar" peasant who had to supply the means and the womenfolk. It is at least part of the basis of the pride (critics say false sense of their own worth) of the free Amhara over subject peoples, enabling evan the simplest soldier to feel that he belongs to the proprietory class. Back home, he therefore despises manual labor, and even in going into battle he used to conscript peasant boys to carry his heavy rhinoceros-hide shield ("gasha"). These boys often became replacements for slain warriors when they could secure weapons, and, in turn, recruited servants for themselves.

441 The typical weapon was the spear (the word "tor" means both war and spear) until replaced in the late 19th and early 20th centuries by rifles, though late-medieval muskets and Ottoman firearms were available to a few from the Portuguese period in the 16th century. The spear, some in use as late as the Italian invasion of 1935/6, sometimes had two or three prongs. Sabers were rare, and available mostley to noble officers. They were of the curved, Damascene type. Daggers of

5: Bruce T-5 (1768-1773) 1804
MP5 Amhara MP5

TRAVELS

TO DISCOVER

THE SOURCE OF THE NILE.

BOOK V.—CONTINUED.

CHAP. XII.

State of Religion—Circumcision, Excision, &c.

346 THERE is no country in the world in which there are so many churches as in Abyssinia. Though the country is very mountainous, and consequently the view much obstructed, it is very seldom you see less than five or six churches; and, if you are on a commanding ground, five times that number. Every great [183] man, that dies, thinks he has atoned for all his wickedness if he leaves a fund to build a church, or has built one in his lifetime. The king builds many. Wherever a victory is gained, there a church* is erected in 346 ●727 the very field, stinking with the putrid bodies of the slain. Formerly this was only the case when the ene-

* The oldest churches in Habbesh are those in the province of Tigre. Axum, now in ruins, possessed many before the Adelan war. A list of these is given in the Appendix of Kebir Neguste, or Chronicle of Axum; and of the lands which they possessed, as given by several kings. E.

5: Bruce T-5 (1768-1773) 1804
MP5 Amhara MP5

346 my was Pagan or Infidel; now the same is observed
● [727] when the victories are over Christians.

346 The situation of a church is always chosen near
running water, for the convenience of their purifica-
351 tions and ablutions, in which they observe strictly the
[783] Levitical law. They are always placed upon the top of some beautiful, round hill, which is surrounded entirely with rows of the oxycedrus, or Virginia cedar, which grows here in great beauty and perfection, and is called Arz *. There is nothing adds so much to the beauty of the country as these churches, and the plantations about them.

In the middle of this plantation of cedars is interspersed, at proper distances, a number of those beautiful trees called Cusso, which grow very high, and are all extremely picturesque.

346 All the churches are round, with thatched roofs; their summits are perfect cones; the outside is surrounded by a number of wooden pillars, which are nothing else than the trunks of the cedar-tree, and are placed to support the edifice, about eight feet of the roof projecting beyond the wall of the church, which forms an agreeable walk, or colonade, around it in hot weather, or in rain. The inside of the church is in several divisions, according as is prescribed by the law of Moses. The first is a circle somewhat wider than the inner one; here the congregation sit and pray. Within this is a square, and that square is divided by a veil or curtain, in which is another very

* Ludolf, in his dictionary, says, this word, in Hebrew, signifies any tall tree. In this, however, he is mistaken. The translators did not, indeed, know what tree it was, and so have said this to cover their ignorance; but Arz is as exclusively the oxycedrus, as is an oak or an elm when so named. Arz is indeed a tall tree, but every tall tree is not Arz, which is the Virginia berry-bearing cedar.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

the contemporary church hierarchy, the *dabtarā* stressing their special intellectual qualification for high positions, the monks their greater piety.

The Traditional Balance

Whatever the internal fragmentation of the church—which was compounded by regionally based doctrinal controversies—it may for the moment be considered as a unified estate vis-à-vis the secular powers. This permits us to raise the question of the integration of politico-military and religious elites in traditional Abyssinian society, a question that may be discussed in terms of two relationships: that between the values represented by the two elites, and that between the interests of their respective institutions.

The social teachings of the Ethiopian Church were couched in terms of practical justice, not universal love. Thus the pacifistic strain in Christianity barely made itself felt. The priests, to be sure, were forbidden to shed blood, animal or human; but this is more in the nature of a necessity for the maintenance of ritual purity than a symbol of moral principle. They went along willingly to the battlefield in ceremonial capacity. In fact, comments d'Abbadie, most of them would reject the interdiction of their taking part in military expeditions as a denial of their rights.[50]

Far from opposing warfare, Ethiopian Christianity served rather as an inspiration and justification for wars; since much of the fighting was directed against Muslim, Judaic, or pagan peoples, the warfare took on something of a crusading tone. As for internecine war, it was commonly justified in terms of *lex talionis*, a religiously sanctioned punishment for the sins of the enemy. In this respect, then, the two elites gave impressive support to each other. The warlords were serving the church by fighting the heathen. The fate of their military expeditions, on the other hand, was assisted by the prayers of the accompanying clergy. This reciprocal dependence was symbolized by the custom of taking some *tābot* along with the army to the battlefield, and by the custom of "greeting" the church as the first thing a warrior does when he returns home.

The values of warfare and religion were further harmonized by the symbolism of the emperor, Lion of Judah. The emperor combined in his person the figures of indomitable warlord and devout—and divinely guided—Christian. This combination was an integral part of the self-image projected by many emperors, as reflected, for example, in the identification with Constantine the Great manifested by Zar'a Yā'qob and Eskender (1478–94) in their choice of throne name, and by Tēwodros II in his coronation speech.

With regard to civil policy, moreover, the nobility and clergy were in basic accord. Both groups felt a special responsibility for adjudicating disputes. Both felt that their superior status entitled them to receive substantial amounts of rent and revenues from lands granted them by the king, and to